

Appl. No. 10/647,537  
Amendment dated May 31, 2005  
Reply to Office Action of February 1, 2005

**AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:**

The attached sheets of drawings include a change to Figures 3 and 5. These sheets of Figures 3 and 5 replace the original sheets of Figures 3 and 5.

Attachment: two (2) replacement sheets

### **REMARKS**

In the February 1, 2005 Office Action, all of claims 1, 4-7 and 10-12 stand rejected in view of prior art. No other objections or rejections are made in the Office Action.

#### ***Status of Claims and Amendments***

In response to the February 1, 2005 Office Action, Applicant has amended the specification, the drawings, and claim 1, 7, and 10 as indicated above. Thus, claims 1, 4-7, and 10-12 are pending, with claims 1 and 7 being the only independent claims. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following comments.

#### ***Interview Summary***

On May 17, 2005, the undersigned conducted a personal interview with Examiner Evan H. Langdon and Examiner Emmanuel Marcelo, who are in charge of the above-identified patent application. Applicant wishes to thank the Examiners for their courteous interview and the opportunity to discuss the above-identified patent application.

During the interview, the Matsuda patent and the Sato patent were discussed.

#### ***Drawings***

Applicant wishes to amend the drawings as attached hereto. More specifically, reference numerals "46d" and "46c" have been added in Figure 3, and a new reference numeral "46h" for the edge portion has been added in Figure 5. Applicant believes that no new matter has been added by this amendment to Figures 3 and 5. Applicant believes that the drawings now comply with 37 CFR §1.83(a).

#### ***Specification***

Applicant has amended the specification to provide better support for claims 1 and 7 as now amended, and also to clarify some of the terms used in the specification. Applicant believes that no new matter has been added by this amendment to the specification, because the recitation of the structural relationship between the first and second recessed portions and the cylindrical portion is illustrated in Figure 5 as originally filed. Applicant believes that the specification complies with 37 CFR §1.71 and §1.75(d)(1).

#### ***Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102***

On pages 2-7 of the Office Action, claims 1-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Patent Application Publication No. 10-117644 to Sato et al. ("Sato patent"). Claims 1-12 stand rejected as being anticipated by U.S. Patent

No. 6,637,690 to Matsuda ("Matsuda patent"). In response, Applicant has amended claims 1 and 7 as presented above.

More specifically, Applicant has amended claims 1 and 7 to clearly recite that the first recessed portion is recessed *discontinuously* from the second recessed portion with an edge portion therebetween. Claims 1 and 7 have also been amended to recite that the first recessed portion is recessed *discontinuously* from the cylindrical portion. This newly added language is supported by Figure 5 as originally filed. Applicant believes that none of the prior art of record discloses or suggests the arrangement of claims 1 and 7 as now amended.

Matsuda Patent

The Office Action on page 4 asserts that the inclined surface of the fixed shaft cover is the first recessed portion, and the recessed surface of the line slider 21 is the second recessed portion. Furthermore, the Office Action asserts that the portion of the line slider 21 on the right hand side of the vertical line shown on page 4 of the Office Action corresponds to the cylindrical portion. In response, Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

More specifically, Applicant believes that the Matsuda patent does not show or suggest the structure of claims 1 and 7. Claims 1 and 7 as now amended clearly require that the first recessed portion be *discontinuously recessed from the cylindrical portion*. Although Applicant acquiesces that the first recess portion can be construed as being recessed discontinuously from the second recess portion shown on page 4 of the Office Action, Applicant believes that the first recess portion is *not* discontinuously recessed from the cylindrical portion. In fact, the first recessed portion is *linearly connected* with the cylindrical portion *on the same level*. There is clearly *no discontinuous recession* of the surface of the first recessed portion with respect to the surface of the cylindrical portion. Accordingly, Applicant believes that the Matsuda patent does not show or suggest any structure that corresponds to the first recessed portion of claims 1 and 7 as now amended.

Therefore, Applicant believes that the Matsuda patent does not disclose or suggest the arrangement of claims 1 and 7.

Sato Patent

The Office Action on page 6 asserts that the upper portion of the recessed portion 44d of the Sato patent corresponds to the second recessed portion, and the lower portion of the recessed portion 44d corresponds to the first recessed portion of claims 1 and 7. Applicant believes that the Sato patent does not show or suggest the structure of claims 1 and 7.

More specifically, Applicant believes that the Sato patent does not disclose or suggest discontinuous recession of the first recessed portion relative to the second recessed portion. Claims 1 and 7 as now amended clearly require that the first recessed portion be *recessed discontinuously* from the second recessed portion *with an edge portion therebetween*. As clearly seen in the Figure on page 6 of the Office Action, the first and second recess portions of the Sato patent are *continuously* connected; there is no discernible edge portion between the two. Accordingly, Applicant believes that the Sato patent does not show or suggest any structure that corresponds to the first and second recessed portions of claims 1 and 7 as now amended.

Therefore, Applicant believes that the Sato patent does not disclose or suggest the arrangement of claims 1 and 7, whether singularly or in combination with the Matsuda patent.

Dependent Claims

Regarding dependent claims 4-6 and 10-12, Applicant believes that they are also allowable over the prior art of record since they depend from independent claims 1 and 7 and therefore are narrower. Since the prior art of record does not anticipate the independent claims 1 and 7, neither does the prior art anticipate dependent claims 4-6 and 10-12.

The amendment to claim 10 is merely to clarify the language of the claim. Applicant believes that the amendment to claim 10 does not alter the scope of claim 10, or add any new matter.


In view of the above comments, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections.

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In view of the foregoing amendment and comments, Applicant respectfully asserts that claims 1, 4-7, and 10-12 are now in condition for allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

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